

Receive Your Benefits By Direct Deposit

Whether you're receiving a Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) check or applying for benefits, we want you to sign up for direct deposit.

Deciding to receive your benefit by direct deposit may be a hard decision—and maybe you need more time to think about it. If so, you'll continue to receive your check by mail until you decide otherwise.

If you're applying for benefits, we will ask you if you have a checking or savings account so you can use direct deposit. If you don't have an account, you can receive a check. Direct deposit is a simple, safe and secure way to receive your benefits, and you remain in control of your money.

What Is Direct Deposit?

Direct deposit gets your Social Security or SSI benefit into your account quickly and safely. The U.S. Treasury sends an electronic message to your bank, savings and loan or credit union crediting your account with the exact amount of your Social Security or SSI benefit.

You can withdraw money, put some in savings or pay bills—the things you do with your money now. The difference is—your check isn't printed or mailed. It can't be lost or stolen.

Why Direct Deposit?

We want you to give careful consideration to the safety and convenience that direct deposit provides. For the last 23 years, millions of Social Security and SSI benefit recipients have used direct deposit. Social Security has delivered more than 1.8 billion direct deposit payments worth \$1.9 trillion, and not one has ever been lost or stolen.

Direct Deposit Gives You Control

Besides being **convenient** for you and **safe** for your money, direct deposit puts you in **control** of your finances. Your money is in your account at the beginning of the business day you're scheduled to receive your benefit—even when you are out of town or unable to get to your bank, savings and loan or credit union.

Where Can You Sign Up?

If you decide that direct deposit is right for you, contact your bank, savings and loan or credit union. They'll be glad to help you sign up.

Or, you can sign up for direct deposit by calling our toll-free number, **1-800-772-1213**. If you call us, we will ask you a few questions to determine your identity. We'll also need your account information and your Social Security number.

After you sign up for direct deposit, your benefit will be deposited to your account within 30 to 60 days. We'll send you a letter telling you when to expect your direct deposit to begin.

You Don't Have An Account

If you don't have an account, consider opening one at a bank, savings and loan or credit union that is convenient to you. Most financial institutions offer a variety of accounts—some with little or no fees. Look for one that best meets your needs.

When you open an account, ask to sign up for direct deposit. Be sure to take your Social Security number when you go.

If for some reason, you can't open an account at a bank, savings and loan or credit union, you may want to consider a special low-cost program the government is developing for you. It's called the Electronic Transfer Account (ETA) program, and it should be available later this year. When ETAs become available, Social Security will send you information about direct deposit, the ETA program and your choices.

Save Social Security Dollars

Direct deposit helps save your tax dollars. It costs 43 cents to print and deliver a federal payment check. It costs 2 cents to make the same payment by direct deposit. The millions of dollars Social Security saves each month by making electronic payments means more money to pay to you and your family in the future.

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